

SPEECH

— OF —

**Rt. Hon. Sir R. Bond, P.C., K.C.M.G.,
Prime Minister,**

**On Short Line Ocean Steam Service, Killary
Harbor, Ireland, to Green Bay,
Newfoundland,**

DELIVERED IN THE

**House of Assembly, Thursday,
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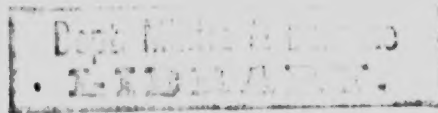
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**On Short Line Ocean Steam Service, Killary Harbor,
Ireland, to Green Bay, Newfoundland.**

RIGHT HON. SIR ROBERT BOND—
In moving the House into a Committee of the Whole to consider Resolutions for the confirmation of an Agreement for the Speedier Communication between Great Britain and the Continent of America, the hon. gentleman said:—

The agreement that the House is called upon to consider, and which the Government hopes it will be pleased to confirm, was entered into on the 11th day of January last, between the Government of this Colony, of the one part, and Messrs. Ochs Brothers, of London and Paris, Merchants, and Harry Craufurd Thomson, of London, Barrister, of the second part, and has for its object the establishment of rapid transit between the old world and the new, by way of and through this Island.

Before we enter into the details of the agreement and the great enterprise to which it relates, it is proper that we should consider the standing of those with whom the agreement has been made. Messrs. Ochs Brothers are a firm of merchants doing business in the cities of London and Paris, and who are intimately connected with very large business enterprises in different parts of the world, notably in Africa.

The Government have satisfied themselves as regards the financial standing of the parties to this agreement.

The advantages that it is hoped and expected will accrue from the carrying into effect of this agreement are clearly set out in the preamble thereto.

1. A safer and speedier means of communication between Great Britain and Ireland, and the continent of North America by way of and through the Island of Newfoundland, thereby facilitating and promoting the development of the resources of this Island.

2. The establishment of a quicker route between Great Britain and the

Pacific coast, the Colonies of Australia and New Zealand, and Japan and other countries of the Far East; and

3. The establishment of a line of steamers which, by reason of their speed and command of the shortest ocean route to Great Britain cannot but prove of immense Imperial value.

The undertaking outlined in this agreement is one to link closer the Mother Land and the great States that comprise Greater Britain: to establish the shortest and at the same time safest route between Europe and America, and to reduce the time at present occupied in transit from Europe to the Orient. We live in an age when time is valued as it never was at any former period in the world's history, and the expenditure of millions of money in the shortening of distance and consequent saving of time is only dependent upon the practicability of the scheme.

For some time past the people of Great Britain have been discussing the question of the Channel tunnel, so as to shorten the time between London and Paris and to bring these two cities within six hours of each other. The estimated cost of the undertaking, namely, £16,000,000 sterling, has offered no barrier, and the only consideration that stands in the way of the immediate adoption of the scheme is a military one.

Within the past two years the Simplon Tunnel, the longest in the world, being 12½ miles, has been completed. This travels almost in a straight line from end to end from Brigue, in Switzerland, to Iselle, in Italy, and cost £3,140,000 sterling. At the present time the United States of America is engaged in cutting through the Isthmus of Panama, which is estimated to cost upon completion the enormous sum of \$140,000,000. Among the most notable engineering achievements of the age, not less costly and difficult in execution than the Panama canal, are the 14 tunnels under the Hudson River, at present under

construction. The approximate cost of these 14 tunnels is \$200,000,000, or about one-fifth of a billion dollars; and they are being built for one purpose only; to save time. It is estimated that at least a million people go in and out of Manhattan every day. At the average of 25 cents an hour in value, this will mean a saving of \$62,500 a day, or \$23,000,000 a year.

Six of these tunnels are being constructed by the Pennsylvania Railroad: four under the East River, and two under the Hudson, thus giving uninterrupted subway connection between New Jersey and Long Island.

If rumor be true, when the Pennsylvania tunnels are completed, transatlantic passengers will take the steamer at Montauk Point, thus cutting down the trip from New York to Europe seven hours.

These facts indicate the value that is placed on time, and that when it has been clearly demonstrated that a saving of time can be effected in the interests of the great world of commerce, the question of cost is regarded as a minor consideration.

One of the Most Important Trade Questions Now Occupying Attention in Commercial Circles

is the shortening and cheapening of transport between Europe and the continent of America and between Europe and the Far East, and a no less important one is the rapid transit of mails and passengers. The passenger traffic between the Old World and the New at the present time is enormous, the United States alone contributing something like 3,000,000 of the mighty host who cross and recross the Atlantic annually on business or pleasure.

The struggle for supremacy in the carrying trade of the Atlantic is pretty well confined to-day between the German and the American lines, although Canada for the last year or two has placed in competition some very fine steamers. Canada, however, is handicapped by the difficulties of the St. Lawrence, by the closing of her principal ports in winter, and by the fogs and ice that prevail to the north and south of this island along the respective routes that her ships have to follow.

Now the physical features of the North American Continent have played and must in the future play a prominent role in giving direction to the trade routes. If we

take a glance at the map we shall find that Newfoundland stretches away east beyond any other portion of North America. It seems to have been intended by the Great Creator as a stepping stone between the Old World and New. It appears like a hand stretched out from the main body beckoning to the nations beyond to come this way in their journeys to and fro in the world.

In the struggle for commercial supremacy the loss or gain of a day in transit may mean the loss or gain of millions of money, and therefore whatever port on this side of the Atlantic stands nearest to the port of departure on the other side must inevitably become the terminal port of the fast ocean service. No old prejudices will be permitted to stand in the way of the adoption of the shortest and safest route, for trade will demand it, and the restless nervous energy of the twentieth century traveller will force its adoption and guarantee its success.

The idea of making Newfoundland a connecting link between the two hemispheres is not by any means a new one. It was proposed by that distinguished Engineer, Sir Sandford Fleming, more than 30 years ago, and he gave practical evidence of his convictions by undertaking and completing a railway survey from the Eastern shore of this Island to the Western as a link in his proposed chain of communication. His idea never materialized. He was just 30 years in advance of the times; but old man as he now is, I hope and believe that he will live to witness the completion of the scheme that his wisdom and foresight foreshadowed as an inevitable one.

In 1897 Mr. P. T. McGrath, the present Chief Clerk of this House, in a very interesting and able article contributed to the June number of the Canadian Magazine set forth the merits of a fast line service via Newfoundland, availing of the Newfoundland Railway to Port aux Basques and the steamer from that port to Sydney, Cape Breton. He contended that by the adoption of this route a saving of some 30 to 36 hours could be made on the time run between London and New York.

In the year 1902, at a banquet given by the Primrose League in London, I availed of the opportunity to revive this question. The occasion was an opportune one, for at that time the Morgan Shipping Combine, which contemplated the absorption of all

the leading steamship lines, was agitating the British public. The effect of my observations was that many of the London and provincial newspapers took the question up and devoted considerable space in favourable comment upon the proposal. Reuter's agent in London called on me and requested a fuller statement of my proposal, and he reported as follows:—

Dealing With the Atlantic Service Sir R Bond said:

"Among the questions affecting Great Britain and her colonies in North America none is more important than that of a fast steamship line across the Atlantic. In discussing this question, certain axiomatic propositions may be laid down:—

1. That the line should follow the shortest route between the two hemispheres consistent with a due regard for safety.

2. That it should avail itself of every portion of land which can be utilized, because the speed of a train greatly surpasses that of the swiftest steamer.

3. That it should be designed for passengers, mails, and express goods only, because rapid transfers of freight are scarcely practicable.

If these considerations are accepted it follows almost inevitably that the natural short line between Great Britain and Canada is via Newfoundland. Thirty years ago Sir Sandford Fleming, with prophetic vision, foretold the day when the Island of Newfoundland would be made the stepping-stone between the Old World and the New. If the Irish Channel tunnel was an accomplished fact, the Canso Strait bridged, and the inter-Colonial Railway extended to Aspy Bay, near Cape North, then a traveller leaving the city of London would reach New York in 124 hours, and only have seventy hours of sea journey. For instance—London to Galway by rail, 12 hours; Galway to Hall's Bay or Exploits Bay, Newfoundland, 67½ hours; Hall's Bay to Port aux Basques by rail, 6 hours; Port aux Basques to Aspy Bay, 2½ hours; Aspy Bay to New York by rail, 36 hours; total, 124 hours.

The time occupied in crossing from Galway to Hall's Bay I have calculated upon the Oceanic's and Teutonic's records of about 25 miles an hour. If turbine ships could be put into service, with a mean speed of 30 miles an hour, the time in crossing the Atlantic would be reduced to about 44 hours. If the tunnel under the

Irish Channel is not regarded as feasible at present, there is an effective substitute for it in the existing line of fast steamers crossing between Holyhead and Kingstown. In mentioning this proposal I have had the query put to me: "How long would this route be available, and would it imply risks of fog and ice?" To this I have unhesitatingly replied that it would be available from May to January, a longer period than that of the St. Lawrence route. With regard to fog, navigators and scientists have proved that, while there is a fog belt about Belle Isle Straits and a second fog belt about Cape Race, Hall's Bay, or Exploits Bay, and all the north-eastern coast of Newfoundland are singularly free from fog. As to ice, a steamer plying to and from Hall's Bay would be no more endangered than a steamer plying in and out of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. As a matter of fact, there would be greater security on the Hall's Bay route because of the absence of fog.

This line would be an important link in the chain of communication, not only between Europe and America, but also between this country and the outlying portions of the Empire by way of the Canadian Pacific Railway across the Dominion and its fine steamers from Vancouver to the East. A glance at the map will show that lines drawn from any part of the American continent to the British Isles all cut through Newfoundland. Nature evidently designed the old colony as the great central point for handling the commerce of the two hemispheres. St. John's is 1300 miles nearer England than New York is, and 900 miles nearer to points in Central or Southern Europe. As an alternative to the Suez Canal route for the transport of military forces to the East it would be of great benefit, and for serving Canada in these respects it would be unequalled. Its chief importance, however, would be as a fast mail and passenger route, representing a saving of at least thirty-two hours over the present actual running time between London and New York. Under the most favourable circumstances, it takes 156 hours, or six days and twelve hours, to make the journey from London to New York. By way of Newfoundland it could be made in five days four hours, or, as I have said, a saving of thirty-two hours in all.

Protecting the Grain Carriers.

With regard to the protection of the

ocean grain routes, it is a matter that the military authorities were discussing when I was in England some eighteen months ago, and there was some talk of establishing large granaries or grain depots so as to obviate the risk. I trust that there may be some merits in the proposition which I have made in this country on the subject. The probability of the Dominion of Canada becoming the main source of supply for Great Britain would seem to me to point to the necessity for protecting as far as possible the line of route. Britain's only fortified base in North America today is Halifax, which is situated 250 miles south of Cabot Strait, the channel most likely to be used; and for vessels to run there would be for them to go in a backward direction, lengthening the voyage when it would have to be made across the Atlantic. It would be useless for British grain carriers, if chased, to run to Newfoundland, unless it was fortified. Under existing conditions a British convoy east of Cape Race would have no chance of escape from a more powerful enemy, whereas, with St. John's fortified, the ships could be securely harbored to await the arrival of a British fleet strong enough to escort them across the ocean.

Dealing with the question of the command of the cables, the Newfoundland Premier remarked:—

The fourteen cables that now cross the Atlantic, with the exception of the Brest cable, pass over the banks of Newfoundland, and lie in a depth of from 50 to 100 fathoms. Five of them lie close together, just off the entrance to Trinity Bay. The location of these cables is known, and it would be a very easy matter to destroy them. The military, naval and commercial consequences which would follow cannot be estimated. Every consideration would appear to point to the desirability of St. John's being made a naval station from which a warship might issue at a moment's notice."

This report was copied almost verbatim by the leading London newspapers. I have mentioned this simply as evidence of the deep interest that was taken at that time in this question of a short line scheme via Newfoundland. The *St. James' Gazette* of July 22, 1902, in commenting upon my remarks, said—

"To America in 124 hours, with only 70 hours at sea, is the newest and most striking proposal for the annihilation of distance, and if Sir Robert Bond can

"use the Colonial Conference for the furtherance of his scheme the Conference will not have sat by any means in vain."

I have troubled the house with these quotations because they are particularly germane to the subject under consideration, and I shall require to have reference to them in the course of my observations. I shall indicate where the proposal outlined in the agreement before the house differs from that which I put forward five years ago, and how greatly superior the present proposal is.

Sometime after I was privileged to awaken public interest in the trans-Atlantic ferry via Newfoundland, Mr. H. C. Thomson, Barrister-at-Law, London, better known, perhaps, as the author of "Rhodesia and its Government," the "Chitral Campaign," "The Outgoing Turk," and "Capital and Labour in South Africa," and as a traveller keen of observation and competent to turn the same to practical account, visited this colony for the purpose of studying the advantages on the spot. During the past three years he has spent several months in the island; has walked over the proposed railway route between Green Bay and Bay of Islands, and from Bay of Islands to the Straits of Belle Isle; has formed an idea of the feasibility of the route as well as the character of the formation underlying the Straits of Belle Isle and the probable cost of tunnelling the same, and has succeeded in inducing the firm of Ochs Brothers to join him in enterprising the short line ocean steam service, with which the agreement now before the house deals.

Since the date of Sir Sandford Fleming's proposal, various attempts have been made to determine the quickest route between Europe and British North America. Amongst suggested fast lines were the following:—

1. From Berehaven, Ireland, calling at St. John's, Halifax and New York.
2. From Milford Haven, Wales, to Paspébiac, Quebec.
3. From Milford Haven to Sydney, Cape Breton, connecting with the Intercolonial Railway.
4. From Liverpool to Quebec, in summer, and to Halifax in winter, in connection with the Canadian Pacific Railway.
5. From Liverpool direct to Gaspé.
6. From Blacksod Bay, Ireland, to Halifax, N.S.

It will be observed that with the exception of the first named, Newfoundland was left out of the plan. This is somewhat remarkable in view of the fact that the East Coast of this Island, say Green Bay, is 1,400 miles nearer the British Isles than is New York; is 610 miles nearer thereto than is Paspébiac; is 1,070 miles nearer than is Quebec; is 370 miles nearer than is Halifax; is 650 miles nearer than is Gaspé, and in view of the further fact that by the adoption of Green Bay, in Newfoundland, as a terminal port on this side of the Atlantic the dangers attending the navigation of the Gulf and River of St. Lawrence or of the Straits of Belle Isle would be obviated, and an immense saving in insurance rates, as well as in time, would be effected.

Now, are the dangers attending the navigation of the Gulf and River of St. Lawrence and the Straits of Belle Isle real or imaginary? There is, unfortunately, no room for doubt as to the real character of these dangers and difficulties. Some six years ago an inquiry was instituted by the shipping interest and marine underwriters into the needs of the St. Lawrence route from Montreal to the sea. Those who are most deeply interested in the navigation of the St. Lawrence River and Gulf and the transatlantic shipping by that route began their enquiry on October 2nd, 1900, and continued the same until the 12th of December. The enquiry was therefore an extended one. The Chairman was Mr. John Torrance. Some of the evidence adduced before that enquiry found its way into the Canadian press, and was as follows:—

"The present state of things is not consistent with the greatest security to life and property. . . . An enormous proportion of the products of the Dominion of Canada at present has no other than the European market, and in order that the producers of Canada may be able to compete with the exporters of other countries successfully, it is necessary that the products of Canada should reach market with as low a charge in connection with its transport as possible. The chief expenditure in connection with such transport, so far as the export is concerned, is made up of freight and insurance. The insurance which the exporter has to pay upon his products is also at pre-

sent a serious charge. It is therefore perfectly clear that to enable the Canadian producer to compete with his rivals, the freight, the insurance upon the hull and the insurance upon the cargo must be as low as circumstances will permit. . . .

The Promptness of Delivery in Europe is of Vital Importance to Much of the Produce of Canada,

especially perishable articles and cattle. . . . The rates on hulls of ocean steamers running to Montreal for say six months and to Atlantic ports in the United States for the remaining part of the year is from 8 to 10 per cent., and in some exceptional cases even 11 per cent. The insurance rate on vessels running to United States ports exclusively is from 3½ to 4½ per cent., and in some cases even 5 per cent., making an average of about 4 per cent. The number of trips made by steamers between British and European ports and Montreal is about five. Thus Montreal tonnage, by these enormous rates, is handicapped as compared with shipping to United States ports to the extent of over 1 per cent. on each voyage; equal in an ordinary steamer worth \$500,000.00 to about \$5,000.00 per voyage, or \$25,000.00 for the Montreal season of five voyages. The increased rate on cargoes carried by the vessels on the Canadian route is about two to five times as great, according to the season of the year, as compared with rates on cargo shipped from ports in the United States."

It is within quite recent date that Lloyd's, in fixing a schedule rate of insurance for Canadian ports, made it higher than that charged to United States ports, and put in a special discriminating clause against "British North America" in their policies. This, in itself, is proof of the feeling of uneasiness that exists in financial circles in respect to the St. Lawrence and the approaches thereto.

The great objection to the Belle Isle route, to the St. Lawrence, is the tortuous, narrow straits, the treacherous tides and currents, and the ever present fogs and ice. The Straits, in their narrowest part, are not more than ten miles wide and do not exceed sixteen miles in width at any point in the whole forty miles of its length. In

a strait such as this, with currents of varying force and direction, and where fog and ice prevail, no amount of care and caution on the part of the masters of shipping can render the same immune from danger. Further, notwithstanding the river improvements and the Channel of the St. Lawrence being deepened at an enormous cost, and an enormous annual expenditure on maintenance, the trouble and difficulty in safely navigating the St. Lawrence have not decreased in proportion. The Belle Isle route is preferred to the Southern route via Cape Race by Canadian liners because the latter is 168 miles longer as between Liverpool and Quebec. The late Principal Grant, than whom a more loyal and enthusiastic Canadian never drew breath, in a communication to the Toronto Globe on the dangers of the Belle Isle and St. Lawrence route, declared as follows:—

Dangers of the St. Lawrence.

"The inexorable logic of events has proved that the Belle Isle and St. Lawrence route for a fast passenger and mail service has not the confidence of capitalists and great shipping companies. The men who know it best, the experienced capitalists connected with the Allan, Dominion, Beaver and other lines, have fought shy of it, except on condition that delays occasioned by fog should not be counted; that is, on condition that we should pay handsomely for a fast line and not get it. They have shown what they think by their action and by their inaction, and the other great line, which is Canadian in origin—the Cunard—agrees with them. What is the use of knocking our heads any longer against a stone wall, or trying to bribe men to try the impossible? The St. Lawrence route is the one hewed out by nature for the transportation of freight and for those passengers—and their number is likely to increase—who are not supremely anxious for speed, and who find pleasure in two or three days on the river and gulf and strait before launching out on the Atlantic. But any man who has hung about the Straits of Belle Isle in a fog and seen the fog lift, only to display fixed brown rocks and floating white rocks, all round him, or who knows something of the currents, cross-currents, shoals, narrows and fogs between the straits and Quebec, must shrink in terror from demanding that ships shall dash through such an environment at the rate of twenty or twenty-three

miles an hour. Dash through fog in mid-ocean, if you like. The danger there is at a minimum, because the ocean routes are well defined. Dash at twenty miles an hour up to the neighbourhood of Green Bay or Halifax or New York, but on peril of having a *La Bourgogne* horror re-enacted two or three times a year, do not try it in the long internal waterway which extends from Belle Isle to Quebec or Montreal."

While the approach to the St. Lawrence by the Southern route is better than Belle Isle Straits the dangers of this route are exceedingly great because of the prevalence of fog and the currents that set in toward Cape Race. The neighborhood of Cape Race has received the unenviable designation of "the graveyard of the Atlantic" because of the number of disasters to shipping that have occurred there, and while it is a direction to masters of shipping steering towards the Canadian shore to keep at least fifty miles to the South of Cape Race, the number of annual casualties reported by Lloyd's and the Liverpool Underwriters' Association bear evidence as to the absolutely unavoidable dangers of that route.

There is a section of the North Atlantic which after careful and prolonged examination has been declared to be an almost entirely fog free zone. The United States Weather Bureau issues monthly pilot charts of the North Atlantic Ocean. In order to make these charts as efficient and helpful as possible to masters of shipping, blanks are provided to masters and owners in which is to be filled in such information as to fogs, ice, and gales as may come to their knowledge. This has been carried out for a number of years with the result that the existence of an almost entirely fog free and wind free zone has been placed beyond question. If you will have reference to the pilot charts that I have laid upon the table of this house, and which indicate the number of days in each hundred upon which fog has been recorded within a given square during a seven year period, 1898 to 1905, you will observe that a line drawn due West from Killery in Ireland, or Plymouth in the South-West of England, to the South-West Arm of Green Bay, in Newfoundland, passes through this fog free zone from beginning to finish. This is precisely the route that the parties to this agreement intend to adopt as their fast line route.

It will be observed on perusal of this agreement that no place is named as the

port of departure in Great Britain or Ireland. The reason for this is that the parties to the agreement considered it wisest to leave that undetermined for purposes of negotiation with the Imperial authorities as regards subsidy, but the route to Newfoundland, and the terminal port on the East coast thereof has been determined.

It will be observed that by the 4th paragraph of this agreement it is stipulated that the steamers to be provided shall sail weekly from some port to be selected by the Contractors in Great Britain or Ireland.

In 1902 When Advocating a Short Line Scheme I Contended in Favour of Galway,

on the West Coast of Ireland, as the port of departure. Since then I have had the very great advantage of consulting with our present Government Engineer, Mr. T. A. Hall, B. A., B. E., of the Royal University of Ireland, than, whom, probably, there is no higher authority on the matter of railways and harbour facilities in Ireland. Mr. Hall came to us a few months ago recommended by Sir Francis Hopwood, then Permanent Secretary of the British Board of Trade, under which Department is the supervision of the whole Railway system of Great Britain. Mr. Hall was Chief Assistant in connection with the Parliamentary and Contract Surveys and preparation of contract plans of the Galway and Clifden Railway; Resident Engineer on Construction of the railways through Connemara; made the Parliamentary Survey of the Killary Branch Railway; was Chief Engineer on Construction of the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway, and at the time of his appointment as Government Engineer was Chief Engineer to the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway Co. His opinions and recommendations, therefore, come with a weight and authority that will hardly be questioned. Mr. Hall recommends Killary Harbour on the West Coast of Ireland as the terminal port for mails and passengers in preference to either Galway or Blacksod, it being, in his opinion, a better, safer, and much more adaptable port of call, besides being at least one hour nearer to Dublin and consequently London, and other large Lancashire and midland towns. He informs me that to connect Killary Harbour with the main line of the Midland and Great Western Railway would only require some twelve or

fourteen miles of railway of a very simple character. The water is reputed to be so deep inshore that a vessel of the largest tonnage could safely lie close to the shore. Good material, rock, sand and gravel, are available, and labour is cheap, and he estimates that a wharf sufficient to accommodate the steamers could be built and equipped with rails, suitable buildings and machinery for £100,000. The harbour is almost completely landlocked by high mountains and resembles a Norwegian fiord. It has been visited by British war vessels of the largest type during manoeuvres.

He adds that he has seen Killary several times during stormy weather and has noticed that the water was very slightly affected. He speaks with authority as regards the character of the railway which it would be necessary to build, as he prospected the route in 1893. Ex. Galway, in his opinion, would be nearly as quick a route as ex-Killary, but the cost of equipping the latter port being so much less than the former and the open sea voyage being shorter, he would strongly recommend Killary. In dealing with this question, then, and for the purpose of comparison I have ventured to take Killary as the starting point for the short line service.

Green Bay is to be the terminal port in Newfoundland from May to January, and Saint John's the terminal port during the four remaining months of the year.

It will also be observed that a broad gauge railway will be constructed between Green Bay and Bay of Islands, a distance of 85 miles, and that a steamer, with a minimum average ocean speed of 20 knots per hour will connect Bay of Islands with Gaspe. At this point passengers would take train for Montreal, where they would connect with the great Railway systems of Canada. This will be the route followed from May to January.

During the remaining four months the steamers will run direct to St. John's; from thence to some port in Canada (probably Halifax) and on to Boston or New York.

Now let us compare this service from the standpoint of distance and time with existing and proposed routes across the Atlantic. We will first compare the distance from port to port between the Old World and the New.

1. By the steamers of the White Star and Cunard lines, which run

between Liverpool and New York, the ocean voyage is 3,150 miles and the average time occupied in crossing is six days sixteen hours.

2. By the North German Lloyd, which run between Southampton and New York, the ocean voyage is 3,100 miles, and the time occupied in crossing is six days, six hours.

3. By the Canadian Pacific and Allan lines, which run between Liverpool and Montreal, the ocean voyage is 2,940 miles and the time occupied in crossing is seven days.

4. By the proposed Blacksod to Halifax Express Line, the ocean voyage is 2,100 miles, and if 25-knot steamers are put on the route, the time calculated to be occupied in crossing is 3 days, 12 hours.

5. By the proposed Newfoundland Line from Killary Harbor to Green Bay, the ocean voyage will be 1,730 miles, and if 25-knot steamers are put on the route the time occupied in crossing will be 2 days, 21 hours.

It will be apparent, then, to the most casual observer that so far as the Atlantic voyage is concerned the Newfoundland route eclipses all others, and if the important matter of the fog-free zone through which the proposed line to Newfoundland will pass is also taken into consideration then there is presented to the traveller the opportunity of crossing the Atlantic with a guarantee of safety and expedition which cannot attach to any other line.

For the purpose of further comparison we will take London, the world's metropolis, and follow the mails and passengers by the various routes to the great centres of trade.

NORTH GERMAN LLOYD STEAMERS.

	mls.	dys.	hs.	m.
London to Southampton.....	92		1	45
Southampton to New York	3100	6		6
New York (by rail) to Montreal.....	463		11	
New York to San Francisco.....	3349	3		8
San Francisco to Yokohama	4530	12		14

WHITE STAR AND CUNARD LINES.

	mls.	dys.	hs.	m.
London to Liverpool..	192½		3	28
Liverpool to N. York	3150	6		5
New York to Montreal	463		11	
New York to San Francisco.....	3349	3		8
San Francisco to Yokohama	4530	12		14

CANADIAN PACIFIC AND ALLAN LINES.

	mls.	dys.	hs.	m.
London to Liverpool..	192½		3	28
Liverpool to Montreal	2940	7		
Montreal to New York	463		11	
Montreal to Vancouver (at 40 miles per hour).....	2892	3		
Vancouver to Yokohama (by 25-knot steamers).....	4283	7		3

PROPOSED EXPRESS LINE.

(Blacksod to Halifax)

	mls.	dys.	hs.	m.
London to Blacksod..	664			14
Blacksod to Halifax..	2100	3		12
Halifax to Montreal..	758	1		30
Montreal to N. York	463		11	
Montreal to Vancouver (via C.P.R.).....	2892	3		
Vancouver to Yokohama.....	4283	7		3

PROPOSED NEWFOUNDLAND LINE.

	mls.	dys.	hs.	m.
London to Killary (via Kingston).	537		12	
Killary to Green Bay	1730	2		21
Green Bay to Bay of Islands.....	85		2	
Bay of Islands to Gaspe	255		10	45
Gaspe to Montreal.....	539		13	30
Montreal to New York	463		11	
Montreal to Port Simpson	2654	2		18
Port Simpson to Yokohama.....	3940	6		14

To Summarise, then, Travelers from London via the Proposed Newfoundland Short Line

will be able to reach the shores of the

between Diamond and New York the

WHITE STAR AND SWISS

Granted that the tunnelling of the Straits is feasible, and that the necessary expenditure is forthcoming (basing calculations on the amount expended in building the Simplon Tunnel in Switzerland, the cost of the Belle Isle Tunnel is expected to be about £2,500,000), we would then have a through railway route to the sea from the great wheat fields and cattle ranches of the North West that must prove of great value to the Dominion of Canada and to Great Britain. We would have an Imperial trade avenue of the first importance to the Empire, shortening the time occupied in travelling from London to Japan by 81 days over any existing route. If this tunnel scheme is adopted, through trains from Green Bay would be able to connect with the Great Northern Railway at Lake Chibiogouma, or a junction could be effected with the Grand Trunk at Lake Abitibi, or with the Canadian Pacific Railway at Sudbury. This will be a matter for arrangement between the contractors and the Quebec Government and the respective railway companies.

I have taken the Great Northern Railway as the connecting line, as it is to pass to the North of Lake Winnipeg on its way to Port Simpson, and it is therefore the natural complement to the line now under consideration. This line upon completion will be one of the greatest inter-ocean lines on the continent. It will take a direct course from Quebec to the Northern end of Lake Winnipeg, passing about 100 miles to the South of James Bay, with which it will have a branch connection. From Lake Winnipeg—still following a direct route—it will cross a low depression in the Rocky Mountain range at the Pine River or Peace River Pass, and terminate on the Pacific Coast at Port Simpson. Its length will be about 2,820 miles, or about 500 miles less distance between the two oceans than any of the other Pacific railways. Further, Port Simpson is 350 miles nearer Yokohama than is Vancouver.

For years Canadian capitalists and politicians have been trying to give vitality to a scheme for an open line which will make them altogether independent of New York for the export of the products of the North-West. The cry has gone up from the West for the best commercial route for the shipment of its products to the Old World. Such a route is now presented to them under this agree-

ment. Canada to-day has to look to the United States ports during the winter months as an outlet for her wheat, but that is far from satisfactory. As a matter of fact United States railways cannot handle expeditiously local traffic. Mr. James J. Hill, head of the Great Northern Railway system of the United States, who speaks from the standpoint of a practical and capable railroad administrator, declares that in order to handle properly the

Existing Volume of Business Without Providing for Natural Increase.

the railroad companies of the United States must within five years expend not less than \$5,500,000,000. As I have remarked, the junction with the Great Northern Railway of Canada at Lake Chibiogouma would probably be the best, but the connection could be made with the Grand Trunk at Lake Abitibi, or with the Canadian Pacific at Sudbury. Through Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie the line would connect directly via Minneapolis and St. Paul with the Northern Pacific, as well as with San Francisco and the South Pacific coast of the United States. Lines drawn to St. Paul and Chicago from the Straits of Belle Isle will be found to be about equal length, to form two sides of an isosceles triangle. The route to St. Paul would, however, be a little quicker and more direct than that to Chicago, which would have to turn aside by Lake St. John; consequently the proposed route would bring St. Paul a little nearer the Straits than Chicago, and only a few hours further away than New York.

The Special Advantages, However of This Tunnel Scheme

will not be so much in the saving of time, appreciable though that be, as in its strategic value in affording a safe and continuous all-the-year-round outlet for the chief food products of Canada—cattle and grain—which in time of war, both by land and sea would be greatly less exposed to attack than any of the existing routes or proposed routes. It would be of more value to Great Britain in war time than many iron-clads. Further, it must be borne in mind that the route to the East via the Suez Canal, is an exceedingly vulnerable one. The route via Newfoundland to Canada

would be both expeditious and easily protected. Within less than three days of leaving Killary, on the West Coast of Ireland, or Plymouth, in the South of England, or Fishguard, or Liverpool, troops could be landed in Newfoundland, 26 hours later they could be landed in Montreal, and 2 days 18 hours later could be landed by through train at Port Simpson on the Pacific coast. From thence to Japan 11 days, to New Zealand 23, and to Australia about the same time, that is by the present steamers of 16½ knots; if 25 knot boats are put on the time would be changed to 7 days to Japan, 16 days to New Zealand, and about the same to Australia.

The English ports that I have named, viz., Plymouth, Fishguard and Liverpool, are about equal distance from Newfoundland. Liverpool and Southampton are pretty well congested, and the high speeds calculated could not be safely maintained within 30 or 40 miles of these ports. Liverpool is subject to fogs of a very dense nature, which would occasionally quite disorganize traffic. It seems to me, therefore, that the choice lies between Fishguard and Plymouth. Fishguard is more central, but Plymouth is so near the French port of Chêrbourg that it would doubtless add to the revenue of the service to call there prior to picking up mails and passengers at Plymouth. Further, as the terminus of the grain route, Plymouth would appear to have the special advantage of being a fortified port. Plymouth may possibly be selected by the contracting parties as the terminal port for the passenger and mail service, as well as the freight route. Should such be the selection the transfer of passengers and baggage at Holyhead and Kingston and the cost of a new railway and dock at Killary would be avoided, Plymouth being already well equipped in that respect.

To those interested in the wheat and cattle trade of the Northwest the advantages of the most continuous railway route to a shipping port within less than three days' steam of Great Britain would be enormous. It is admitted by those interested in the trade that if cattle had a few hours longer on the cars, and a shorter sea trip than is now possible, they would be landed on the other side of the Atlantic in much better condition, for the great loss and deterioration in weight takes place during the last two or three days on the sea. But it is the wheat trade that is the

most important. When speaking on this matter in 1902 I referred to the possibility of the Dominion of Canada becoming the main source of food supply of Great Britain. Great Britain has to depend very largely for her wheat supply upon the United States, Russia, the Argentine Republic, Canada and India, as a consequence of the falling off of the area under cultivation and the increase of her population. 30 years ago the United Kingdom produced 120,000,000 bushels of wheat, and imported only 64,000,000 bushels. The production in 1901 was only 55,000,000 bushels, while the importation of wheat and flour was 186,000,000 bushels, the area under cultivation having decreased from 3,800,000 acres to 1,740,000 acres in 1901. Broomhall's Corn Trade Year Book for 1902 said:—

"Under present conditions it seems quite likely that the production of wheat in the British Isles will sink to a mere 20,000,000 bushels, whereas if the population increases during the next twenty years at the same rate as it has done in the past twenty years there will be 50,000,000 people to feed who will require nearly 320,000,000 bushels per annum of wheat alone. No man who is acquainted with the position of food supplied in Great Britain can doubt that America and Russia together could exact any terms from Great Britain in six months by simply prohibiting the export of grain and provisions."

With the marvelous development of the North West of Canada that danger is rapidly disappearing. It is beyond dispute that before long Canadian production will enable the United Kingdom, in time of stress, to be almost independent of any other source of supply. While India produces only ten bushels to the acre the rich unfertilized areas of Canada produce twenty-five bushels to the acre. In the year 1901 the production was 63,425,000 bushels from a little over two and one half million acres. The importance of having a route by which this immense wheat supply could be carried to the British Isles, comparatively free from danger in time of war, does not need to be dwelt upon.

Five Years Ago a Temporary Scare Was Created in England

by the production of a statement showing that during the previous ten years at no

period did the United Kingdom have sufficient stocks of wheat and flour for more than seven weeks' consumption, and that frequently the stocks had fallen as low as two weeks' consumption. It was suggested by certain military authorities that warehouses or granaries should be erected in various parts of the United Kingdom for the storage of six or twelve months' supply of food stuffs. In 1903 Mr. Theo. V. S. Angier, F. S. S., in a paper which he read before the City of London Traders' Club on the subject of England's food supply in time of war, dealt with the question of the establishment of such warehouses or granaries, and showed the enormous cost that this would entail on the Imperial exchequer. He said:

"Contemplate for a moment what the storage of twelve or even six months' supplies of corn would mean. We imported, according to the Board of Trade returns, 192½ million cwt.s. corn, flour and meal in the whole year 1901, or 96½ million cwt.s. for six months, at a cost of £30,000,000. Calculating interest at 4 per cent. per annum, warehouse rent and charges according to Dock Tariffs, and we have the annual expense of over £5,000,000 to keep this six months' store of wheat and flour. But if storage be necessary or advisable as a preparation, it is not reasonable to suppose that bread-stuffs would be sufficient; we should with equal reason require to keep like stores of eggs, animals, meat, rice, sugar, tea and tobacco, as necessaries, and six months' imports of these articles came to £46,000,000 in 1901. Interest on this sum would represent £1,840,000 per annum, rent and charges and loss in deterioration another £1,500,000. Thus a storage for six months of the ordinary necessities of life would entail an annual charge of some £8,000,000 to say nothing of the disorganization of trade by introducing the Government as a large dealer. Or if, as would be more reasonable, the Government paid a premium to traders and farmers for storing, bonding and stacking the six to twelve months' supplies, the cost would be equally great. Would the country face such a burden added to its already heavy weight of taxation? I doubt it, more especially as the necessity for it cannot be proved."

The adoption of a grain route via Newfoundland, which I have outlined, would entirely obviate the necessity for such an

expenditure, because a continuous train service from the Canadian North West via Belle Isle tunnel, and on to Great Britain would bring abundant supplies within three days' steam of England.

The question of tunnelling the Straits of Belle Isle opens up a still broader view of the outlet for the wheat supplies of the great North West,—the cheapening of its cost of export as well as its safety in transfer. Mr. T. C. Davis, M.P., for Saskatchewan, said at Ottawa in March, 1902:—

"What we want is a continuous line of railway which can be operated twelve months in the year, and double-tracked, if necessary. Last year, 400,000 people in the North West produced 1,000,000 bushels of grain. We are going to get people in there at the rate of 100,000 per year, and in eight or ten years the production of that country will be increased to 400,000,000 or 500,000,000 bushels. Wheat will have to be carried to the seaboard, and that cannot be done over our canals when they are frozen over six months in the year. What we want is to be able to put our wheat in the car and run it through to the seaboard. Then we have to take into account the depreciation in the value of the wheat and the charges for interest and insurance if it has to be stored over during the winter, which must amount to at least six cents per bushel. There is also this further point to be considered. If we have to depend wholly upon our canals we will have to store an immense quantity of wheat in the elevators at the head of Lake Superior, and when navigation opens in the spring and we throw that on the markets of the world, down goes the price, so that our farmers will be out not only by the loss in storage and insurance, but also by the depreciation in value on account of such an immense quantity being thrown in the market. What we want is a continuous line of railway from the West to some ocean port."

This is precisely what the Belle Isle tunnel in connection with the Newfoundland short line scheme would provide.

It is Sometimes Said That Railways Can Never Compete

for freight with water carriage, but the great Northern Railway gave an undertaking to the Dominion Government in

February, 1901, to carry wheat from all points on its line in the province of Manitoba to the ocean steamers at Quebec, for nine cents per bushel, which would save the Manitoba farmer about seven cents per bushel on present freight rates, to the seaboard, by mixed land and water carriage. It has also to be remembered that the longer railway haul necessitated by the route under discussion would be compensated for by the smaller rates of insurance, which are at present exceptionally high, owing to the dangers incident to the navigation of the St. Lawrence by the present ocean routes from Canada.

The question may be asked, what about the possibilities of railway operation during the winter through Northern Newfoundland and Labrador, and thence to Winnipeg? My answer is: Little or no difficulty has been experienced in operating the Nfld. Railway through the winter; that the climate here is milder, and the snowfall less, than in the Maritime Provinces, and that in Labrador the snowfall is very much less than in most parts of Canada the average snowfall at Moose Factory, Hudson Bay, being only 80 inches, while at Montreal it is 177. During the exceptionally severe winter of 1904 the Lake St. John Railway was kept open and ran on time when the Maritime railways were blocked with snow for days together.

The question of the cost of the undertaking is one with which this House is not called upon to deal. It is sufficient for our purposes that the well-known firm of Ochs Brothers of London do not regard the same as an obstacle to its being carried out. The only question appears to be whether we shall have 17-knot or 25-knot boats upon the Atlantic route and the tunnel beneath the Straits of Belle Isle. This depends entirely upon the encouragement that is received from the Governments of those countries that will so largely share the advantages of the undertaking. These questions will be speedily settled, for as soon as this agreement has been approved by the Legislature of this Colony, Mr. Thomson, one of the contractors, will leave England to ascertain what can be hoped for in that direction.

Can we reasonably expect that encouragement will be forthcoming from those countries that will be benefitted by this short line scheme? It would be reason-

able to expect nothing less. For years a subsidy of \$1,250,000 to be guaranteed by the British and Canadian Governments, was going a-begging. This subsidy was proposed for an ocean line which would make Canada entirely independent of New York as an outlet for the products of the Dominion. There is no line operating to-day that renders Canada independent of New York throughout the year. The proposed Newfoundland line will do so. As I have pointed out, the wheat producers and cattle raisers of Western Canada will be able to ship by through cars to Newfoundland, and three days later land their shipments in England. The route proposed by this agreement will be the connecting link for mails and passengers between England and the Western Hemisphere, and consequently will be entitled to a subsidy from all countries interested.

The following subsidies are being paid for mails between England, the United States and Canada:

I find by the Return of Subsidies to Shipping Companies tabled in the House of Lords on the 13th August, 1903, that the following amounts were then paid by His Majesty's Government:—

The Peninsular and Oriental Company.....	£161,375	2	6
The Inman Steamship Co.....	26,990	11	7
The Cunard Steamship Co....	220,881	10	0
The Oceanic Steam Navigation Co.....	185,970	10	1
The Orient Steam Navigation Co.....	7,163	3	5
The Royal Mail Steam Packet Co	7,117	0	0
The Pacific Steam Navigation Co	4,885	0	0
The Canadian Pacific Railway Co.....	80,003	15	0
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	£712,376	12	7

Some of these subsidies are paid under agreement, whereby certain ships may be utilized by His Majesty's Government as cruisers in the event of war.

The steamers to be employed in the proposed Newfoundland short line route may be so constructed as to be of incalculable value to His Majesty's Government as cruisers, or, as Lord Brassey would term them, "eyes of the fleet," and it is hoped that His Majesty's Government will recognize the fact. A few years ago the "Shipping and Mercantile Gazette," of London, published some articles on the "Mercantile Marine in War Time," and gave a

tentative table of scale of subventions of a very practical nature, which was as follows:—

Scale of Subventions and Premiums for Approved Ocean Going Steamers of 4,000 tons and Upwards Built to Admiralty Requirements.

Class.	Speed in knots.	Percentage cost of hull and machinery by the Admiralty.	Annual premium per ton, gross register, payable by the Admiralty during efficiency, apart from hire in war time.
A. 1	20 to 21	20 per cent.	5s. 6d.
A. 2	21 to 22	21 per cent.	5s.
A. 3	22 to 23	22 per cent.	6s. 6d.
A. 4	23 to 24	23 per cent.	8s.
A. 5	24 to 25	25 per cent.	9s.

Lord Brassey has expressed the opinion that "it is of urgent importance to bind together as closely as we can all the parts of our scattered Empire. Frequent and rapid communication are amongst the most effective of all the bonds with which the fabric can be welded."

In Answer to a Question Before the House of Commons Select Committee on Steamship Subsidies in 1903, Lord Brassey said:

"He would give subsidies for forming a union between the different portions of the Empire." In a debate in the House of Lords 8 July, 1902, he said,—

"I propose to deal with merchant cruisers, not as fit to take the place of regularly built vessels of war but as the eyes of the fleet. . . . For certain services in which extreme speed is necessary the Navy could be reinforced from the mercantile marine. It cannot give us battleships, armoured cruisers, or a torpedo flotilla. It can

supply scouts, perhaps of a more effective type than any regularly built vessels of war. For scouts in search of an enemy whose position is unknown, high speed and long coal endurance are essential, and these the mercantile auxiliaries possess in a high degree. In the war with Spain the value of mercantile auxiliaries were practically tested. Many ships were taken up by the United States and successfully used as cruisers.

Without dwelling further on the value of auxiliary cruisers I turn to the relative position of Great Britain and foreign countries in ocean going steamships having a speed of 20 knots and over. This is the most suitable type. Lloyd's Register gives a list of 28 ships, and seven only are under the British flag. Since 1891 eleven ships of 20 knots and over have been built for foreign countries, while the "Oceanic" of the White Star line is the only vessel added to the British fleet. The ships which carry mails across the ocean under the British flag should be second to none in power and speed. All the naval powers of Europe give liberal subsidies. . . . It must be for the Government to use opportunities. Canada may desire improved communication as a means of extending trade. The mother country may assist in order to obtain auxiliary cruisers."

The views expressed by Lord Brassey on that occasion were concurred in by Lord Selborne, then first Lord of the Admiralty, and also by Earl Spencer.

There is an opportunity now presented under this agreement whereby the views expressed by the noble lords referred to may be carried into effect. This Government is prepared to assist towards this end by the granting of a cash subsidy of \$75,000 per annum; by the granting free of terminal sites; of right of way for railways, and grants of land amounting to 125,000 acres, together with the minerals that may be contained thereon.

It is important for the House to observe that under this agreement no liability whatever by way of subsidy attaches to this Colony until the service is in actual operation.

This agreement in respect to the short line scheme by way of Green Bay and Bay of Islands holds good for 25 years from the date this House ratifies it.

If this railway line is not commenced

within two years from that date, and is not completed within five, and the steamships which form part of the service are not constructed or provided within that period, all the powers, rights and privileges granted to the contractors shall cease and determine. If, on the other hand, the contractors shall perform their part of the undertaking they shall be entitled at any time within eight years from the date of the confirmation of this agreement by the Legislature to construct a railway through the Northern peninsula of this Island to the Straits of Belle Isle, to tunnel under the Straits, to construct a railway through that portion of the Labrador peninsula which is under our jurisdiction, and if necessary to construct a railway to St. John's, or some other terminal port on the Southern part of the Island.

Up to this point it will have been noticed that I have directed my observations principally to the advantages that must accrue to the Empire from the adoption of this scheme, and to Great Britain and Canada in particular. I have endeavoured to show of what immense value the proposed fast steamers may be to the Admiralty in case of war; of what value such steamers must prove to the producers of the North West of Canada, and their value to business men generally by reason not only of the rapid transit but the equally important reason of a much lower rate of insurance on cargoes and hulls.

I have dealt upon these points at length, because I hope to reach an audience outside the bounds of this Colony—a people whom the contractors will approach in a short time for subventions in aid of the scheme.

The Governments of England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and China are all interested in this undertaking, and I, therefore, desire to aid to the best of my ability, in enlisting their sympathy and support towards the accomplishment of the end that we have in view.

Now What are the Advantages to Accrue to This Colony from This Enterprise?

We shall have direct weekly communication with Great Britain and Europe, and the Colony will be brought within three days steam of the British Isles. The advantage of this to trade and commerce will be at once apparent to busi-

ness men. We shall have a portion of the great tourist traffic of both hemispheres brought to our shores, with the probability of large numbers of them sojourning in the Island. Trade will thereby be increased and employment will be furnished in various directions. A knowledge will be acquired of the country and its resources, which will certainly lead to the development of mining and agriculture. We shall probably have an extension of our fisheries by the facilities afforded for the rapid transit of fresh fish to the great markets of England. We shall have a first-class broad gauge railway constructed through the Northern portion of the Island, connecting its Eastern shores with the Western, entailing a very large expenditure of money on construction and on terminal facilities in Green Bay, Bay of Islands, and affording employment for hundreds of our people, both mechanics and laborers. We shall have permanent employment furnished for many hundreds in connection with the operation of the road and machine shops and the transfer of goods at the terminal ports. We shall have an increased revenue flowing from an increased earning power amongst our people.

By the adoption of the Belle Isle tunnel route, a branch railway of 100 miles or more will skirt the Western shore of the Northern peninsula, tapping all the principal settlements, Bonne Bay, Port Saunders, and Flowers Cove, and running through the petroleum areas at Parsons' Pond and further North down to the Straits of Belle Isle. I have been assured by Mr. Howley, F.G.S., head of our Geological Department, that such a line as he has laid down on the map that I have tabled is entirely practicable and is likely to lead to important mineral developments. This tunnel route would undoubtedly secure the wheat and cattle traffic of Canada so far as exportation to Great Britain is concerned, and Green Bay and St. John's would thus become two of the greatest shipping ports on this side of the Atlantic, and the amount of labour and profit that would accrue to our people would be enormous. We cannot possibly realize all that the successful carrying out of this project would mean to this Colony, but we can see in this project a great revolutionary force that will change the whole aspect of things in this Colony for the better.